

House Education & the Workforce Committee

John Boehner, Chairman

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ISSUE SUMMARY

H.R. 1 Enhances State and Local Flexibility

The thicket of federal education programs perpetuates bureaucracy at the state and local level. There are more than 60 programs under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) -- so many that few people can agree as to exactly how many exist. Few of these programs have ever been evaluated and demonstrated to have improved student achievement, and many of them are duplicative or fund activities that are not based on scientific research.

Paperwork mandates and regulations force states and local school districts to sacrifice student achievement to comply with bureaucracy. Giving state and local officials additional flexibility helps them tailor programs to more closely meet students' unique needs and priorities.

States have become the laboratories of education innovation. H.R. 1 gives them the freedom and flexibility they need to implement innovative education reform plans that have proven successful in improving student achievement.

- H.R. 1 gives states and local schools additional flexibility to improve student performance by cutting red tape and consolidating a host of programs to ensure that state and local officials can meet the unique needs of students. According to the Heritage Foundation, there are 61 different authorized ESEA programs under current law; H.R. 1 cuts this number nearly in half (33).
- The bill dramatically enhances flexibility for local school districts, giving them the freedom to transfer up to 50 percent of the federal education dollars they receive among an assortment of ESEA programs as long as they demonstrate results. **Local school districts do not have to receive permission from the state or the Education Secretary to transfer funds.** This unprecedented new flexibility gives local school districts the freedom to target resources where they're needed most -- from class size reduction to higher teacher salaries to technology in the classroom -- and address needs that often change from one year to the next, since these transfers are not permanent and must be made on an annual basis.
- H.R. 1 authorizes states to transfer up to 50 percent of their state activities share of the same ESEA programs, from one program to another, but not out of Title I.
- The bill gives states the flexibility to use NAEP (the National Assessment of Educational Progress) *or another assessment selected by the state* that meets widely recognized professional and technical standards.
- The measure streamlines the myriad programs and ties federal dollars to accountability for performance in order to get more dollars to school districts, and to ensure that funds are used effectively.

- It streamlines and consolidates federal education technology programs into a performance-based grant program that sends more money directly to schools.